

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method ~~Method~~ of offering a service provided by a server computer in a communication network, comprising:

~~a step of sending, from the server computer that provides the service to a client computer, a service description~~ document describing a service, ~~the document~~ comprising a description of a functionality implemented during a preprocessing or post-processing of data in XML format of a message exchanged during the execution of said service on the communication network.

2. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 1, wherein said functionality defines processings adapted to produce or use data in XML format defined in a first abstract part of [[a]] the service description document.

3. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 2, wherein the description of said functionality is inserted in said first abstract part of the service description document.

4. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 1, wherein said preprocessing or said post-processing is implemented via a script language.

5. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 1, wherein said functionality is defined as a data item in XML format in a first abstract part of [[a]] the service description document.

6. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 5, wherein said data item in XML format defining said functionality is encoded in a second concrete part of the service description document.

7. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 1, wherein the description of said functionality comprises a list of properties supported by said functionality, said properties defining at least respectively:

[[-]] the node in the communication network adapted to execute said processing; and

[[-]] the type of processing.

8. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 7, wherein said functionality also comprises a property adapted to specify whether said processing is carried out on the sending or reception of said message.

9. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 7, wherein said functionality also comprises a property adapted to specify the message or a set of messages to which said processing applies.

10. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 7, wherein said functionality also comprises a property adapted to define the data produced or used by said processing, and ~~possibly~~ may also include the type of said data.

11. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 7, wherein the description of said functionality comprises a property adapted to specify whether the processing to be carried out is obligatory or optional.

12. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method of offering a service~~ according to Claim 7, wherein, for at least one property supported by said functionality, the description of said functionality comprises a list of values attributable to said property.

13. (Currently Amended) A method ~~Method~~ of testing access to a service by a client computer in a communication network, from a service description document, comprising the following steps implemented by said client computer:

[[-]] extracting a description of a functionality implemented during a preprocessing or the post-processing of data in XML format of a message exchanged during the execution of the service on the communication network;

[[-]] reading ~~the~~ a value associated with a property adapted to specify ~~the~~ a node in the communication network adapted to execute the processing;

[[-]] reading ~~the~~ a value of a property adapted to specify whether the processing is obligatory or optional; and

[[-]] verifying whether the processing is supported by the client computer in the communication network when said processing is obligatory and must be executed by said client computer in the communication network.

14. (Currently Amended) A method ~~Method~~ of validating a message received by an intermediate computer in ~~the~~ a communication network, from a service description document comprising a description of a functionality implemented during a preprocessing or the post-processing of data in XML format of the message exchanged during the execution of a service on the communication network, comprising the following steps:

[[-]] extracting a processing from the received message ~~received~~;

[[-]] acquiring from said service description document at least one imperative value associated with a property of the processing; and

[[-]] verifying whether said imperative value is included in a list of values which can be attributed to a property supported by said functionality described in the service description document.

15. (Currently Amended) The method ~~Method~~ according to Claim 14, ~~wherein it also comprises~~ further comprising the following steps:

[[-]] reading ~~the~~ a value associated with a property adapted to specify whether the processing is executed before or after the sending of said message; and

[[-]] executing said processing when said value is adapted to specify that the processing must be executed before the sending of the message.

16. (Currently Amended) A device ~~Device~~ for offering a service provided by a server computer in a communication network, comprising:

sending means ~~of~~ for sending, from the server computer that provides the service to a client computer, a service description document comprising a description of a functionality implemented during a preprocessing or post-processing of data in XML format of a message exchanged during the execution of the service on the communication network.

17. (Currently Amended) A device ~~Device~~ for testing access to a service by a client computer in a communication network, from a service description document, implemented by said client computer, comprising:

[[-]] extracting means for ~~of~~ extracting a description of a functionality implemented during a preprocessing or ~~the~~ a post-processing of data in XML format of a message exchanged during the execution of the service on the communication network;

[[-]] first reading means ~~of~~ for reading ~~the~~ a value associated with a property adapted to specify ~~the~~ a terminal in the communication network adapted to execute the processing;

[[-]] second reading means ~~of~~ for reading ~~the~~ a value of a property adapted to specify whether the processing is obligatory or optional; and

[[-]] verifying means ~~of~~ for verifying whether the processing is supported by the client computer in the communication network when this processing is obligatory and must be executed by the client computer in the communication network.

18. (Currently Amended) A device ~~Device~~ for validating a message received by an intermediate computer in ~~the~~ a communication network, from a service description document comprising a description of a functionality implemented during a preprocessing or ~~the~~ a post-processing of data in XML format of the message exchanged during the execution of a service on the communication network, comprising:

[[-]] extracting means ~~of~~ for extracting a processing from a received message ~~received~~;

[[-]] acquiring means ~~of~~ for acquiring, from said service description document, at least one imperative value associated with a property of the processing; and

[[-]] verification means ~~adapted to~~ for verifying whether the imperative value is included in a list of values which can be attributed to a property supported by the functionality described in the service description document.

19. (Currently Amended) A server ~~Server~~ computer in a communication network, comprising means adapted to implement the method of offering a service according to Claim 1.

20. (Currently Amended) A client ~~Client~~ computer in a communication network, comprising means adapted to implement the method of testing access according to Claim 13.

21. (Currently Amended) A computer ~~Computer~~ in a communication network, comprising means adapted to implement the method of validating a message

according to Claim 14.

22. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which is stored a computer executable program ~~Computer program which can be read by a microprocessor, comprising portions of software code adapted to implement the method of offering a service according to Claim 1, when this computer program is loaded in and executed by the microprocessor.~~

23. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which is stored a computer executable program ~~Computer program which can be read by a microprocessor, comprising portions of software code adapted to implement the method of testing access according to Claim 13, when this computer program is loaded in and executed by the microprocessor.~~

24. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which is stored a computer executable program ~~Computer program which can be read by a microprocessor, comprising portions of software code adapted to implement the method of validating a message according to Claim 14, when this computer program is loaded in and executed by the microprocessor.~~